REMARKS

The Examiner is thanked for the Office Action of November 19, 2007. This request for reconsideration is intended to be fully responsive thereto.

DRAWINGS

The Examiner suggested that FIG. 2 should be designated by a legent such as –Prior Art—because only that which is old illustrated. Following the Examiner's suggestion, the Applicant hereby submits the replacement sheets for FIGS. 1 and 2. Now, FIG. 2 is designated by a legent, --Prior Art--, and FIG. 1 was simply separated from FIG. 2 in a separate sheet for the Examiner's convenience. No new matter has been added.

CLAIM OBJECTIONS AND AMENDMENTS

Claims 4-16 were objected because the language "an air space amout of…mm" is unclear since the language appears to direct to a volume while the unit of measurement is in a length measurement which is directed to a thickness of a layer and the abbreviation "JIS-A" is unclear in meaning. Regarding the language "an air space amount of…mm", the Examiner is suggested that the abbreviation, "mm", i.e., "millimeter" was used because the meaning of the "amount of air space" in this application is "the total of the thickness of air space occupied to a vertical section in a compressive layer". See the last sentence of the paragraph [0008] in the original specification. Therefore, the abbreviation, "mm" should be sufficiently clear.

Regarding the abbreviation "JIS-A", JIS is widely and officially accepted Japanese

Standards, i.e., Japanese Industrial Standards. This is the most typical standard that has been used in Japan. JIS K6253 is the standard for rubber physical testing method. JIS-A is a testing of K6253 by type A durometer, which is same as ISO48-1979. K6253 shows A and D types and no D type is shown therein. For example 50JIS-A has "50" which shows hardness, which should be clear to any one in this art.

Claim 1 was amended to simply incorporate the limitation in the original but deleted claims in combination of the paragraphs [0023], [0044], [0064], and [0074]. Claims 2, 3, and 5 were amended to clarify the meaning of the claims. Claim 4 was amended to claim the same limitation of Claim 3 but dependent from Claim 2. Claim 8 was amended to claim the same limitation of Claim 5 but dependent form Claim 2. Claims 6, 7 9-16 were canceled. No new matter has been added.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. 103 (a)

Claims 1-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US5,431,989 to Beltzung et al. (Beltzung) in view of US6,182,568 to Ogita et al. (Ogita). The Examiner suggested that regarding Claims 1 and 2, Beltzung teaches a printing blanket described in the present invention except that Beltzung does not clearly teach a surface rubber layer but Ogita teaches in the FIG. 1 and Col. 10, lines 55-67 of Ogita. The Examiner continued that regarding Claim 3, the use of a separation layer is well known in the art as exemplified by Beltzung at col. 1, lines 13-19. In addition, the Examiner suggested that regarding Claims 4-6, the selection of the desired air space amount, the desired matrix hardness for the compressive layer and the desired thickness of the separation layer would be obvious through routine experimentation depending upon a

pringing configuration and materials used for printing in order to get best possible print quality. The Applicant respectfully disagrees.

[BELTZUNG]

Regarding the separation layer, although Beltzung has the cellular rubber layer divided in upper and lower layers, a fabric layer and other reinforcement layers separate the cellular, and the thickness of the reinforcement layers are 0.1-1 mm. Beltzung uses the fabric for the separation layer and not elastomer. Fabric is soft, and the hardness and the thickness thereof cannot be restricted/limited as the present invention. Here, the fabric cannot be used to separate the function of the first and the second compressive layers unlike the elastomer of the present invention. Furthermore and most importantly, the layer of fabric cannot be used to absorb the normal printing pressure and rapidly applied over-printing pressure at the compressive layer.

In the present invention, the separation layer exists so as to separate the function of the first compressive layer and the second compressive layer. As appeared in the table, the first compressive layer absorbs the general pressure and the second compressive layer absorbs the rapid pressure. The separation layer of Claim 1, unlike Beltzung which supports/contacts two compressive layers, separates the compressive layers. Therefore, the present invention is different from Beltzung in the way it uses the separation layer. Here, the hardness and the thickness of the separation layer are restricted so as not to transmit the general pressure to the second compressive layer.

Regarding the amount of air space, Beltzung simply shows the volume of the cellular by the percentage, and therefore actual pressure/impact absorption is uncertain.

In the present invention, the air space amount necessary for the pressure absorption is specified, which gives more precise high quality products. Also, depending upon the cellular, the volume may not be uniform, and using the percentage of the cellular volume as in Beltzung is not appropriate way to evaluate. Furthermore, determining the percentage from the product can be extremely difficult. The present invention resolved this problem by giving an easy calculation of the thickness and porous rate at the same time.

[OGITA]

First, Ogita also discloses the pinting blanket but Ogita shows layers directly arranged on the peripherial surface of the sleeve but does not use the reinforcement layer of one or more fabric layer.

Regarding the separation layer, Ogita has a separation layer type of non-expansion layer 13 formed by spirally winding the wire or thread. See Co. 8, lines 16-27 of Ogita. Ogita uses a cotton thread, a polyster thread, and a rayon thred as examples. In Ogata, there is no description as to the hardness of the non-expansion layer 13, and no description as to the limitation of absorbing normal pringing pressure at the first compressive layer and to absorb rapidly applied over-printing pressure at the second compressive layer. In the present invention, hardness is ranged between 70JIS-A and 80JIS-D and the thickness is 0.05 mm or more. These limitations are simply not exisiting in Ogita.

Third, regarding the amount of air space, Ogita deals with the issues in relation to the thickness of the compressive layer and porosity of the compressive layer. The present invention mainly deals with the amount of the air space. No indication or suggestion as to

the air space appears to be in Ogita. Here, it is understandable for one with skills in the art that the thickness and the amount of air space do not match and Ogita should have air spaces because of the compression layer. However, Ogita simply ignored or did not need to even consider that the amount of air space means the total of the thickness of the air space occupied to the vertical section in the compressive layer. See the paragraph [0008] of the present invention. This is another difference between Ogita and the present invention.

Conclusion

As appeared in the above-explanation and argument, fabric layers of the cited references are simply divided in to the upper and lower compressive layers. No amount of air space is tought or suggested by the cited references. Because of the above-identified and fully discussed differences, it is respectfully submitted Claims 1-5 and 8 are now in condition for allowance and notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner believe further discussion regarding the above claim language would expedite prosecution they are invited to contact the undersigned at the number listed below.

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